



BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE PROCEDURES

Operations Order

5.8.01

PHOENIX POLICE DEPARTMENT

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1. Refer to [Operations Order 5.8.00, Evidence, Impounding, and Property](#) for general/universal evidence and property impound and documentation procedures.
2. **BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE**
 - A. Biological evidence includes, but is not limited to:
 - Blood and blood stains
 - Urine and urine stains
 - Saliva and saliva stains
 - Semen and semen stains
 - Human tissue, teeth, or bones
 - Skin cells and sweat stains
 - Feces and fecal stains
 - B. Handling Biological/Biohazard Materials
 - (1) Items possibly containing biological evidence should be considered a potential biohazard and must be handled carefully to prevent contamination and decomposition.
 - (a) Disposable nitrile or latex gloves will be worn at all times and other proper personal protective equipment (PPE) will be used in accordance with [Operations Order 5.7.00, Communicable Disease Control Plan](#).
 - (2) Proper decontamination procedures will be followed in accordance with [Operations Order 5.7.00, Communicable Disease Control](#).
 - C. Collecting Biological Evidence
 - (1) To prevent cross contamination, **each** biological evidence item, including controls, will be packaged separately and in accordance with [Operations Order 5.8.00, Section 4](#).
 - Biological evidence that also needs arson analysis should be packaged according to [Operations Order 5.8.00, section 5.M](#).
 - (2) All items with biological evidence should be collected at the scene and packaged unless the items are large or immobile.
 - (a) Large or immobile items should have the biological evidence collected from the item at the scene.
 - Cutting of the stain should occur if the stain is absorbed into the item, such as the cutting of a possible stain from carpet.
 - Swabbing of the stain should occur if the stain is on a non-porous surface, such as a wet swab of a possible blood stain on a piece of glass, or wet and dry swabs off of a steering wheel.
 - Contact CSRU if clarification/further instructions are needed.
 - (3) Blood obtained from a victim or suspect for analysis (10 ml is ideal with a minimum 2 ml required) must be placed in color-coded vials or tubes which are available at hospitals or from a DUI blood evidence collection kit/box (the color-coded caps on blood vials/tubes are standard for all laboratories in the United States).
 - Blood for **alcohol/drugs** and toxic vapor analysis must be drawn into a **gray-topped tube**.
 - Blood for **DNA** (deoxyribonucleic acid) analysis must be drawn into a **purple-topped tube**.
 - If possible, serum tubes will not be used for alcohol/drugs or DNA analysis and are unacceptable for toxic vapor analysis.
 - Parafilm sealed tubes from medical draws are unacceptable.
 - All vials/tubes and outer packaging will be properly sealed and clearly marked with the IR number and the name of the suspect/victim.



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2. C. (4) Urine obtained for analysis (30 ml is ideal with a minimum 5 ml required) must be placed in a standard urine vial obtained at a hospital or from a DUI urine evidence collection kit/box.

- All vials and outer packaging will be properly sealed and clearly marked with the IR number and the name of the suspect/victim.

- (5) In order to preserve the characteristics of biological evidence, proper storage is necessary.

- Dried porous evidence, such as clothing, swabs, or fabric, or food items with possible biological material present, should be stored in frozen storage.
- Dried non-porous evidence, such as baseball bats, firearms, or leather shoes, with possible biological material present, should be stored at room temperature.
- Blood vials/tubes and urine vials must be stored in refrigerated storage.

D. Preparing Biological Evidence for Impound

- (1) Items containing wet/damp/moist biological evidence **MUST** be air dried, as soon as possible, at the Evidence Drying Facility located at 621 W. Washington, prior to impounding for frozen storage (see [5.8.06, Impound Locations](#) section 1.D.(2) for information on drying procedures).

EXCEPTION: Fecal matter or items containing liquid biological evidence, such as used condoms, should **NOT** be dried prior to impounding/frozen storage, and should be packaged in plastic evidence bags.

- (2) The paper-backed evidence bags, paper bags, or cardboard boxes used to collect biological evidence at the scene should be placed inside plastic bags only for transportation to the Evidence Drying Facility (the plastic bags will be securely closed prior to being transported to avoid contamination of police vehicles and other areas).

- (3) For items requiring refrigeration/freezing, the words REFRIGERATE or FREEZE will be printed on the front of the evidence package where it can be clearly seen by PMU and LSB personnel.

- (4) A BIOHAZARD sticker will be clearly displayed on all packaging.

- (5) For sexual assault kits, IL/suspect biological collection kits, and strangulation examination kits, see below for additional procedures.

E. Sexual Assault Kits - A sexual assault examination and the collection of evidence (sexual assault kits) from a live sexual assault victim is the responsibility of a designated, trained forensic nurse examiner (FNE) or, if the victim is deceased, personnel from the Office of the Medical Examiner (OME).

- (1) Examinations of live victims are generally performed at the Phoenix Family Advocacy Center (FAC).

- (a) FNEs are responsible for the collection, drying, and packaging of sexual assault kits of live victims.

- Once the examination is completed, the kit is packaged per protocol and placed in a locked, secured temporary refrigerator.

- (b) A Family Investigations Bureau (FIB) detective will assume responsibility of the kit by removing the kit from the temporary refrigerator and impounding the kit in a second designated refrigerator located at FAC (**see** section 1.H below for preparing and documenting the kit for impound).

- If the kit is collected in another city/FAC (not Phoenix), the FIB detective will retrieve the kit from its location and then impound the kit in the designated refrigerator located at the Phoenix FAC.



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2. E. (1) (c) PMU personnel will pick up the kit from FAC and transport it to PMU for long-term refrigerated/frozen storage.
- (2) Examinations of deceased victims are performed at the OME with a Homicide detective standing by.
 - (a) Personnel from the OME are responsible for the collection and packaging of sexual assault kits of deceased victims.
 - (b) Once the examination is completed, the kit is handed over to the Homicide detective and they are responsible for drying (if necessary), documenting, and impounding the kit (see section 1.H below for preparing and documenting the kit for impound).

F. IL/Suspect Biological Collection Kits and Strangulation Examination Kits

- (1) IL/suspect biological examinations are generally performed on individuals potentially involved in a sexually based incident but can be completed in other incidents as well.
- (2) Strangulation examinations are generally performed on victims potentially involved in a strangulation/domestic violence incident but can be completed in other incidents as well.
- (3) The examinations, to include the collection of biological evidence from an IL, suspect, or strangulation victim, are the responsibility of a designated, trained FNE.
 - FNEs are responsible for the collection, drying, and packaging of these kits.
 - Once an examination is completed, the packaged kit will be turned over to the assigned officer/detective and they will prepare, document, and impound the kit in accordance with sections 1.G and 1.H below.

NOTE: This does not prohibit a trained biological collection employee to obtain buccal swabs as a standard from an IL, suspect, or strangulation victim.

G. Preparing and Documenting Sexual Assault Kits, IL/Suspect Biological Collection Kits, and Strangulation Examination Kits for Impound

- (1) For each sexual assault kit, IL/suspect biological collection kit, or strangulation examination kit, all the envelopes with swabs collected during the course of an examination will be packaged in one evidence bag and listed and entered as one item in the Evidence section of the IR following the below procedures.
 - (a) Sexual Assault Kit swabs
 - Select *Victim Sex Crime Evidence Kit* as the "Category"
 - Select *Evidence* as the "Action"
 - Select *Victim Sex Crime Evidence Kit* as the "Property Type"
 - (b) IL/Suspect Biological Collection Kit swabs
 - Select *Item* as the "Category"
 - Select *Evidence* as the "Action"
 - Select *IL/Suspect Biological Collection Kit* as the "Property Type"
 - (c) Strangulation Examination Kit swabs
 - Select *Item* as the "Category"
 - Select *Evidence* as the "Action"
 - Select *Strangulation Examination Kit* as the "Property Type"

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2. G. (1) **NOTE:** A laboratory request will not be automatically generated for an IL/suspect biological collection kit or strangulation examination kit; therefore, if an analysis is needed, a Forensic Form will be completed and submitted with *Process for DNA* as the "Requested Action".

- (2) The remainder of a kit (clothing, blood tubes, urine samples, etc.) will be packaged separately in their own evidence bag and listed in the Evidence section of the IR under the appropriate "Category" (NOT under the *Victim Sex Crime Evidence Kit* "Category"): for example, *Item* for clothing, *Blood Tube for Alcohol/Drugs* for gray-topped blood tubes, and/or *Urine for Alcohol/Drugs* for urine samples.

NOTE: A gamma-hydroxybutyrate acid (GHB) analysis can only be performed if the sample has been collected 12 hours or less from the alleged incident; therefore, the time of the incident and the time of collection will be noted in the "Description" box of the Evidence section of the IR.

- (3) Ensure the appropriate procedures listed in section 1.E above are also followed.

H. Packaging Biological Evidence for Impound

- (1) A paper-backed evidence bag, paper bag, or cardboard box will be used to package and impound biological evidence/biohazard material and items containing biological evidence/biohazard material.

- **EXCEPTION:** Fecal matter or items containing liquid biological evidence, such as used condoms, should be packaged in plastic evidence bags.
- **All** packaging must clearly display a BIOHAZARD sticker.

- (2) Refer to [Operations Order 5.8.00, section 4](#) for further information.

I. Impounding Biological Evidence

- (1) Dried, packaged biological evidence will be handed directly to a PMU technician during PMU's normal business hours (see [5.8.06, Impound Locations](#), section 1.C.(2)).
- After PMU's normal business hours, dried biological evidence will be impounded in the refrigerator or evidence lockers located in the PMU Annex at 621 West Washington.
- (2) DUI blood and urine evidence collection kits/boxes will be impounded in a precinct property room refrigerator (if available) or the PMU Annex refrigerator.

Last Organizational Review: